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TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

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SUBJECT: BOSTON GLOBE ARTICLE ON TERRORISM

REF: AMMAN 6869

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF NOV 7 BOSTON GLOBE ARTICLE REQUESTED
REFTEL:

BEGIN TEXT: TERRORIST GANGS REACHING FOR NERVE GAS,
GRUESOME NEW WEAPONS--BY WILLIAM BEECHER, GLOBE WASHINGTON
BUREAU.

WASHINGTON -- TWO CHILLING, UNPUBLICIZED INCIDENTS--
THOUSANDS OF MILES APART--RAISE THE SPECTER OF GRUESOME
NEW WEAPONS IN THE HANDS OF TERRORIST GANGS.

THE FIRST OCCURRED LAST FEBRUARY IN BERLIN AND VIENNA.
SIMULTANEOUS POLICE RAIDS CRACKED A RING ALLEGEDLY INVOLVED
IN MAKING DEADLY NERVE GAS AND OFFERING IT FOR SALE TO
TERRORISTS IN THE MIDEAST.

SEIZED IN VIENNA, ACCORDING TO DIPLOMATIC SOURCES, WAS MORE
THAN A QUART OF NERVE GAS OF A TYPE DEVELOPED BY THE NAZIS
DURING WORLD WAR II.

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POLICE INFORMANTS SAID PRELIMINARY EFFORTS HAD BEEN MADE BY THE GANG TO SELL VIALS OF TABUN GAS, BUT APPARENTLY NO SALES HAD BEEN CONSUMMATED.

THE SECOND INCIDENT OCCURRED SEVERAL MONTHS AGO IN THE UNITED STATES. POSTAL AUTHORITIES NOTICED A SMALL PACKAGE THAT AROUSED THEIR SUSPICION. THE TREASURY DEPARTMENT'S ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND FIREARMS DIVISION X-RAYED THE PARCEL AND SAW WHAT APPEARED TO BE A SMALL EXPLOSIVE.

IT WAS TURNED OVER TO ARMY EXPERTS AT ABERDEEN (MD) PROVING GROUNDS FOR EXAMINATION AND DISARMING. WHAT ARMY SPECIALISTS FOUND WAS A SMALL CHARGE DESIGNED TO EXPLODE A VIAL OF NERVE GAS WHEN THE PACKAGE WAS OPENED.

OFFICIALS AT THE AGENCIES INVOLVED REFUSE TO DISCUSS THE MATTER. IT COULD NOT BE DETERMINED TO WHOM THE PARCEL WAS ADDRESSED OR ITS COUNTRY OF ORIGIN, BUT ONE SOURCE FAMILIAR WITH THE HUSHED-UP AFFAIR SAYS IT IS BELIEVED TO HAVE COME FROM AN ARAB TERRORIST GROUP.

THE TWO INCIDENTS UNDERScore CONCERN BY A NUMBER OF U.S. OFFICIALS THAT EVER MORE SOPHISTICATED, DESTRUCTIVE DEVICES MAY BE TURNED TO BY POLITICALLY MOTIVATED, WELL-FINANCED TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS, AS MANY GOVERNMENTS AROUND THE WORLD TIGHTEN THEIR DEFENSES AT AIRPORTS AND ELSEWHERE AGAINST MORE TRADITIONAL WEAPONS AND TECHNIQUES.

TWO RELATIVELY RECENT DEVELOPMENTS SERIOUSLY COMPOUND THE PROBLEM. ONE IS THE RISE OF ACTIVE GOVERNMENTAL SUPPORT, NOTABLY FROM LIBYA, FOR TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS. ANOTHER IS EVIDENCE OF GROWING COOPERATION AND COORDINATION AMONG TERRORIST GROUPS FROM DIFFERENT NATIONS AND WITH SEEMINGLY DIFFERENT OBJECTIVES.

AMBASSADOR DOUGLAS HECK, CHAIRMAN OF A GOVERNMENT-WIDE ANTITERRORISM WORKING GROUP, SAID IN AN INTERVIEW, "LIBYA IS AIDING, ABETTING AND PROVIDING SANCTUARY TO A NUMBER OF TERRORIST CAPABILITIES."

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HECK, WHO IS A SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE, ALLUDED TO REPORTS THAT THE LEGENDARY TERRORIST KNOWN AS CARLOS HAS FREQUENTLY OPERATED FROM LIBYA WITH ACTIVE LIBYAN SUPPORT.

"I'VE GOT TO ASSUME THAT A TERRORIST GROUP WHICH INCLUDES PEOPLE LIKE CARLOS WILL BE AFTER THE LATEST WEAPONS THAT WOULD BE EFFECTIVE ON A LARGE SCALE," HE SAID. THE

INFERENCE WAS THAT, WITH THE BACKING OF A GOVERNMENT, TERRORISTS COULD GET ACCESS TO WEAPONS MORE DIFFICULT FOR A SMALL, OUTLAWED GROUP TO ACQUIRE.

OTHER SOURCES ASSERT THAT THE AIR FRANCE HIJACKING THAT ENDED WITH THE DRAMATIC ISRAELI RESCUE AT ENTEBBE WAS CARRIED OUT BY THREE GROUPS--THE POPULAR FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE, THE GERMAN BAADER-MEINHOF GANG AND A GROUP HEADED BY ILLICH RAMIRES-SANCHEZ, ALIAS CARLOS.

ONE TYPE OF WEAPON THAT WORRIES OFFICIALS IS THE SHOULDER-FIRED, HEAT-SEEKING MISSILE. IN 1973, ACTING ON A TIP FOR ISRAELI INTELLIGENCE, ROME POLICE CAPTURED ARAB TERRORISTS BEFORE THEY COULD FIRE TWO SOVIET-MADE SA-7 HEAT-SEEKING MISSILES AT AN EL AL AIRLINER.

FOR YEARS THE UNITED STATES REFUSED TO SELL ITS OWN VERSION OF THAT WEAPON, THE REDEYE, TO MANY COUNTRIES FOR FEAR IT COULD SLIP INTO THE HANDS OF TERRORISTS AND BE USED TO SHOOT DOWN LUMBERING AIRLINERS.

A DECISION THIS SUMMER TO SELL 250 REDEYE MISSILES TO JORDAN IS UNDERSTOOD TO HAVE TRIGGERED A HEATED ARGUMENT WITHIN THE BUREAUCRACY, WITH SOME OFFICIALS INSISTING ON EXTREMELY STRINGENT PROCEDURES TO GUARD SUCH WEAPONS AS THE PREREQUISITE FOR THEIR DELIVERY TO JORDAN OF ANY OTHER COUNTRY IN THE MIDEAST.

THERE IS CONSIDERABLE CONCERN ABOUT CHEMICAL AND BACTERIAL AGENTS, SOME OF WHICH ARE NOT TOO DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN. WHEN TICKS WERE MAILED THIS SUMMER TO A NUMBER OF AMERICAN BUSINESS EXECUTIVES, U.S. SPECIALISTS QUICKLY INVESTIGATED TO DETERMINE FIRST IF TICKS, INFECTED WITH UNCLASSIFIED

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BACTERIA, VIRUSES OR GERMS, COULD TRANSMIT DISEASE WHEN SENT BY MAIL, AND SECOND WHETHER THE LETTERS WERE THE WORK OF A TERRORIST GROUP. THEY CONCLUDED THAT DISEASE COULD NOT LIKELY BE TRANSMITTED THAT WAY AND THAT THE EFFORT WAS NOT BY A TERRORIST GROUP BUT BY A CRIMINAL EXTORTIONIST.

BUT THE NERVE GAS INCIDENTS INCREASE THEIR APPREHENSION. THE GANG IN VIENNA AND BERLIN WAS BROKEN UP ONLY BECAUSE AUSTRIAN POLICE HAD BEEN TIPPED OFF ABOUT THEIR PLANS IN LATE 1975, AND AN EXTENSIVE INVESTIGATION LED TO THE RAIDS ON FEB. 27 OF THIS YEAR, BUT THE FACT THAT THE GAS WAS MANUFACTURED IN BERLIN FROM FAIRLY COMMON CHEMICALS WORRIES MANY OFFICIALS.

ANOTHER CONCERN, PARTICULARLY AS NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS

PROLIFERATE AROUND THE WORLD, IS THAT A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION MIGHT STEAL ENOUGH PLUTONIUM FOR EITHER A HOMEMADE ATOMIC BOMB OR A TERROR WEAPON COMBINING HIGH EXPLOSIVES AND RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL.

RECENT NEWS ACCOUNTS SUGGEST THE EASE WITH WHICH PHYSICS STUDENTS AT PRINCETON AND MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, WORKING FROM UNCLASSIFIED DATA, DESIGNED POTENTIALLY WORKABLE ATOMIC BOMBS.

BUT ROBERT KUPPERMAN CHIEF SCIENTIST FOR THE U.S. ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT AGENCY, SAYS THAT, WHILE HE DOES NOT DISMISS THE MATTER LIGHTLY, IN HIS OPINION IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR PHYSICS MAJORS--OR TERRORISTS--TO ACTUALLY FABRICATE A BOMB WITHOUT KILLING THEMSELVES.

HE NOTES THE EXTREME DIFFICULTY OF HANDLING AND MACHINING THE RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL THAT IS THE CORE OF A BOMB AND THE HAZARDS OF DEALING WITH THE UNUSUAL HIGH EXPLOSIVES THAT ARE CRITICAL TO SUCH A WEAPON.

OTHER EXPERTS SAY IT WOULD BE A DIFFERENT MATTER IF THE SKILL AND RESOURCES OF A GOVERNMENT WERE PUT BEHIND THE EFFORT. IN THAT REGARD, CONCERN WAS EXPRESSED ABOUT THE MOTIVATION BEHIND THE CURRENT TRAINING IN THE UNITED STATES OF ABOUT 100 LIBYAN STUDENTS IN NUCLEAR PHYSICS, ENGINEERING AND MATHEMATICS. MOST OF THE STUDENTS ARE UNCLASSIFIED

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SAID TO BE ON GOVERNMENT SCHOLARSHIPS. END TEXT. KISSINGER

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